

Montross, Va. – I imagine that many of you have heard about the tragic shooting that occurred at Marine Corps Base Quantico last Thursday evening. I was deeply saddened to hear about this act of senseless violence. My thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the victims, and to the Quantico community and the United States Marine Corps as a whole.

As I read emails and letters that constituents send to me, and as I speak with citizens throughout the First District, the overwhelming sentiment is that Washington needs discipline. Folks often make a simple comparison: “My family has a budget. My business has a budget. Why doesn’t Washington have a budget?” I couldn’t agree more. This past week, I was pleased to support a commonsense budget blueprint for the upcoming 2014 fiscal year, one that responsibly addresses the needs of so many of our fellow citizens, while also setting forth a responsible pathway to balance our budget in ten years.

The FY 2014 Budget Proposal (H.Con.Res. 25) passed the House last Thursday after several days of healthy debate about the financial health of our nation. I believe that it is absolutely critical for Congress to support policies that help our middle class and our communities by fostering economic growth and an environment in which innovation and hard work can thrive and businesses can hire workers. At the same time, we cannot forget that folks have paid their hard-earned money into programs such as Medicare, which will not be sustainable in the future if reforms are not put in place today. This budget proposal looks out for these folks, protecting Medicare benefits for those who are 55 and older, while also preserving the program for future beneficiaries. I am committed to ensuring that this critical program remains solvent.

However, this budget was not perfect. Specifically, I am especially concerned about defense-related budget decisions; specifically, I strongly believe that our defense funding should be driven by the need to do all we can to defend this nation and support our men and women in uniform. While this budget does restore significant funding to our defense budget for FY 2014, extensive budget cuts, known as sequestration, remain in place, and I believe these cuts must be replaced in order to ensure that our men and women in uniform have the highest caliber of resources and training that they need to accomplish their missions. Overall, though, I was pleased to support a budget proposal that seriously addresses our nation’s fiscal woes while also protecting the vital functions of government and the needs of our citizens.

Finally, I was also pleased last week to reintroduce the Advancing Offshore Wind Production Act, which would facilitate the development of offshore wind energy resources off Virginia’s coast. This legislation passed the House of Representatives as a part of a larger package called

the Domestic Energy and Jobs Act in June 2012, but unfortunately did not pass the Senate before the end of the 112th Congress. Our nation cannot continue to rely on energy sources in unstable regions of the world. Instead, a comprehensive energy strategy is required that embraces numerous forms of renewable energy as well as domestic resources such as oil and natural gas. Energy independence must be the goal of any energy policy, and my bill takes a step toward commonsense energy policy.

The main streets of Virginia's First District are full of ideas to get our economy back on track, and your feedback is so important to me as I serve you. I can be reached by telephone at (202) 225-4261, through my website ( [www.wittman.house.gov](http://www.wittman.house.gov) ), on Facebook ( [www.facebook.com/robwittman](http://www.facebook.com/robwittman) ), and via Twitter ( [www.twitter.com/robwittman](http://www.twitter.com/robwittman) ).

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee where he is the Chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee.

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